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ABSTRACT

The accreditation manual of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) contains a statement that, whenever possible, criteria for assessing standards should be qualitative rather than quantitative. The study reported in this paper was conducted to gather baseline data on the extent to which accrediting bodies have included quantitative terms in standards related to program goals, structures, and processes. Quantitative statements were defined as any reference in an accreditation standard where a numerical value could be attached. Minimum hours, minimum degree levels, numbers of required semesters or quarters, ratios of students to faculty, and percent of increase in funding for library materials are examples of terms that met the criteria for being identified as quantitative. The accreditation manuals of the American Psychological Association (APA), the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and CACREP were examined to determine the presence of quantitative statements in the standards of these bodies. A model which included 47 categories of accrediting information revealed that, when compared to APA and CSWE, CACREP had more categories which included quantitative information and was more expansive on quantitative statements within each category. (NB)

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Quantitative Statements
in Standards of Three Accrediting Bodies:
APA, CACREP, and CSWE

by

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Running Head: Quantitative Statements

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ABSTRACT

A CACREP accreditation policy states that, whenever possible, criteria for assessing standards should be qualitative rather than quantitative. The accreditation manuals of the American Psychological Association (APA), Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) were examined to determine the presence of quantitative statements in the standards of these bodies. A model which included forty-seven categories of accrediting information revealed that, when compared to APA and CSWE, CACREP had more categories which included quantitative information and was more expansive on quantitative statements within each category.

ABSTRACT

The accreditation manuals of the American Psychological Association (APA), Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) were examined to determine the presence of quantitative statements in the standards of these bodies.

In 1978 Petersen conducted a study on issues concerning the standards and guidelines of specialized accrediting bodies recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). Among the conclusions presented in Petersen's summary was the statement that, "With some exceptions, accrediting standards and guidelines are more qualitative than quantitative." (Petersen, 1978) In addition, a CACREP accreditation policy states that, "Criteria are qualitative rather than quantitative whenever possible." (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 1988) Recent discussions by an American Psychological Association (APA) Task Force on the Scope and Criteria for Accreditation resulted in a conclusion that, "Accreditation will be data and outcome oriented and both the process of training and the status of graduates of the program will enter into the evaluation of programs." (Anderson, 1989) In light of these statements, the authors were interested in determining, "To what extent do quantitative statements and references occur in the accreditation standards of APA, CACREP, and CSWE?"

Quantitative statements were defined as any reference in an accreditation standard where a numerical value could be attached. Minimum hours, minimum degree levels, numbers of required semesters or quarters, ratios of students to faculty, and percent of increase in funding for library materials are examples of terms that met the criteria for being identified as quantitative.

The purpose of the study was to gather baseline data on the extent to which accrediting bodies, in an age of accountability and an emphasis on outcomes, have included quantitative terms in standards related to **program goals, structures and processes**. Student outcomes were not the subject of this study.

Procedures

Accrediting manuals were obtained from three accrediting bodies: APA, CACREP, and CSWE. All three bodies accredit programs which prepare professionals who often work together in teams that provide counseling and related services.

APA accredits doctoral programs in professional psychology. "The accreditation of professional psychology programs has, to date, been in the areas of clinical, counseling, school and combined professional/scientific psychology, but is not in principle limited to these areas." (American Psychological Association, 1986) CACREP accredits, "Entry level master's degree programs in Community Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, School Counseling, and Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education and doctoral degree programs in counselor education and supervision." (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 1988) CSWE, "establishes standards for the accreditation of social work education programs at both the baccalaureate and master's levels." (Council on Social Work Education, 1988) Only standards related to graduate programs were included in the study.

After accreditation manuals were obtained, a framework was selected for organizing the various dimensions of accreditation that were included in the manuals. Eight dimensions were used in Petersen's study (1978) to examine how accrediting bodies address program goals, structures, and processes. Hagerty and Stark (1989), in their work on comparing accreditation standards across selected professional study fields, modified Petersen's eight dimensions.

In order to assess the current validity of this classification scheme, three raters who were not familiar with the Petersen study read the accreditation standards of

the selected ten professional fields and independently developed a set of dimensions that would appropriately represent emphasis in the standards on goals, structure, and processes of the educational program. The dimensions derived by the three raters and those from the Petersen study were similar. However, we modified Petersen's scheme by collapsing the library, facilities, and resources categories into a single resource facilities dimension and adding an additional dimension that addressed evaluation activities. (Hagerty and Stark, 1989)

The authors elected to use the seven dimensions developed by the recent work of Hagerty and Stark. Each of the seven dimensions in the Hagerty and Stark framework contained additional categories. Forty-seven categories were used to classify quantitative statements.

One author of this study read all three manuals to find any standards that contained quantitative statements. These statements were recorded for each association in the appropriate dimension and category. The other author independently followed the same procedure. The same terms were identified by each author with the exception that one author included several terms which were questionable in regard to whether they met the criteria for being classified as quantitative. Three independent reviewers were in agreement that the terms should be retained. For example, one set of terms that was in question related to degrees held by faculty members. The reviewers agreed that master's degree and doctoral degree were levels of academic accomplishment that related to minimum quantitative standards.

A specific example of a dimension, a category within the dimension, and quantitative statements for each accrediting body is shown in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 here

A summary of quantitative statements, organized by dimension, category, and accrediting body appears in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 here

The presence of a quantitative statement is shown by an "X". It should be noted that in some cases several quantitative statements appeared in a particular category, as illustrated in Table 2. No attempt was made to quantify the number of quantitative statements because of: (1) differences in the number of programs each body accredits and (2) variations in writing and presentation styles.

Findings

The data presented in Table 2 were analyzed to: (1) determine whether accrediting bodies have standards which include quantitative statements in certain dimensions and categories and (2) to discuss some of the specific areas that appear to receive higher quantitative emphasis. In some categories there are more quantitative statements than the examples used in the discussion which follows. Readers are also cautioned to remember that although *quantitative* statements may not have appeared in a particular dimension or category, in many cases *qualitative* statements were present. It was not the intent of this study to judge the appropriateness of the presence of quantitative or qualitative statements. The page numbers which follow specific quotes refer to the accreditation manual of the accrediting body being discussed.

Dimension 1: Mission and Goals

None of the accrediting bodies had quantitative statements for program mission and philosophy, goals and objectives, or organizational structure.

Dimension 2: Faculty

None of the accrediting bodies had quantitative statements for competencies in teaching and research; faculty expectations in teaching, research, service and practice; promotion and tenure policies and procedures; faculty compensation; and faculty evaluation.

All of the accrediting bodies had statements relative to faculty preparation and minimum faculty needed for the preparation program and activities within the program. There were variations in terms of total faculty needed before a program could be accredited. No minimum number was specified by APA. CACREP specifies that there must be, "at least three full-time faculty members assigned to the academic unit in counselor education." (p. 30) CSWE requires evidence that, "the program has a minimum of two full-time faculty members with master's degrees in social work whose primary assignment is to the program." (p. 90)

Although it may be strongly implied, particularly in reference to professional psychologists, it is interesting to note that APA standards did not contain references to the doctoral degree as a minimum requirement for program faculty. There were numerous references to quality of the faculty in the APA accreditation requirements: "Members of the professional faculty should have a sound background of training and experience including a psychology internship where appropriate, and should give evidence of staying abreast of new developments." (p. B-11)

In contrast, CACREP and CSWE were quite specific relative to degree requirements. CACREP standards state that, "In addition to the program leader(s) at, at least two (2) other

faculty members have teaching assignments to each program and hold doctoral degrees in counselor education or closely related fields." (p. 30) CSWE, as stated above, requires institutions to have faculty members with master's degrees in social work.

Both CACREP and CSWE had quantitative statements relative to faculty workload. CACREP, by far, gave the most quantitative attention to workload. Because of the marked difference with which CACREP approaches quantification of faculty workload, the CACREP workload statements are presented in their entirety:

Within the program, the ratio of full-time equivalent (FTE) students to FTE faculty is no greater than 10:1. (p. 31)

The average student-to-advisor ratio for the academic unit, based on head count (not FTE), is no greater than 20:1. (p. 32)

The practicum and internship experiences are tutorial forms of instruction; therefore, the individual supervision of five students is considered equivalent to the teaching of one three-semester hour course. Such a ratio is considered maximum. (p. 29)

The within-an-academic-term student to faculty ratio for practicum or internship seminars should not be greater than 10:1 for each three-semester or equivalent quarter credit hours of faculty member load assignment. (p. 29)

Doctoral committee chairpersons chair a maximum of 10 doctoral student committees during a given academic term. In addition to the number of doctoral committees chaired, program faculty serve on a maximum of 10 other doctoral supervisory committees during any academic term. (p. 35)

The only workload statement that appeared in the CSWE standards related to gender issues. Institutions accredited by CSWE must, "Present evidence of equity in work assignments by gender." (p. 103) There was debate as to whether this statement qualifies as a quantitative statement. APA and CACREP requires submission of data on numbers of faculty by ethnic background and gender. In general, there were more quantitative statements on ethnic

- background and gender in CSWE than in standards of the other two accrediting bodies. CSWE accreditation standards were the only ones to address faculty mix in quantitative terms. Their standards indicates that if the ratio of males to females on the faculty is disproportionate, documentation must be given to show that the program has made special efforts to recruit women faculty. CSWE also asked institutions to provide gender composition of faculty by rank and salary.

CSWE was the only body which asks for quantitative data on faculty development in that it requests percent of time each faculty member spends on development.

Readers must again be cautioned that the absence of quantitative statements does not indicate inattention to a particular topic. The APA accreditation standards contained several qualitative references to ethnic background, religious considerations, and gender. In contrast to CSWE and APA, CACREP standards provided minimal qualitative standards relative to faculty ethnic background and gender.

Dimension 3.0: Students

None of the accrediting bodies had quantitative statements for program support for students; student services support; opportunities for developmental experiences; and student evaluation policy and procedures.

APA described some criteria relative to admission, recruitment and transfer. APA required all applicants to the programs receive specific program information, including, "the usual size of the applicant pool; the acceptance and attrition rates; the percentage of male, female, minority, and handicapped students; students' age distribution," as well as other criteria (Appendix B. p. 13).

Although there are assumptions that may be made in all accrediting bodies relative to

graduate requirements/minimum number of graduates, CACREP is the only body which included a quantitative statement: "The program for which accreditation is sought should have minimum of five (5) graduates within the prior two years." (p. 24)

No numeric requirement was stated for the category of student mix and diversity by any of the accrediting manuals. However, CSWE addressed equity by requesting programs to, "Show that the composition of the student body reflects adherence to an affirmative action plan for admitting women. Give the composition of the student body by gender." (p. 103)

Dimension 4.0: Curriculum and Educational Programming

None of the accrediting bodies had quantitative statements on the categories of balance of theory and practice, existence of nondegree and continuing education programs, curricular evaluation procedures, course revision and experimentation, curricular design, and contextual study.

All three accrediting bodies addressed minimum educational time requirements. Since the example presented in Table 2 addresses time requirements, the specific statements will not be presented again. Suffice it to say, that all the groups evidently believe that this is an area of accreditation that can and should be stated in quantitative terms.

Both APA and CACREP addressed sequencing of the internship experience. APA standards indicated that, "The internship is taken after completion of relevant didactic and practicum work and precedes the granting of the doctoral degree." (p. B-18) CACREP standards state that, "The program requires students to complete a supervised internship . . . which is begun only after successful completion of the student's practicum." (p. 29) Both associations also listed the required core courses whereas CSWE gave much more latitude to the higher education institution.

CACREP was the only one of the three accrediting bodies that offered quantitative

standards relative to specializations. For example, "Specialization within the doctoral program is offered only in areas in which there is at least one (1) program faculty member with specialization and experience in the area." (p. 34) The philosophical stance of CACREP on specializations at the master's and doctoral degree levels differed markedly from the other two associations. For example, CSWE accredits the degree level only and institutions are free to develop specializations and emphases. There is no provision to accredit separate program areas at the master's degree level as is true with CACREP.

Dimension 5.0: Program Administration and Governance

None of the accrediting bodies had quantitative standards on administrative functions, administrator compensation, evaluation of program leadership, and program budget.

All groups had quantitative statements relative to administrator qualifications. APA standards indicate that, "Psychologists [doctoral degree implied but not specified] administratively responsible for the training program should hold a tenured or senior appointment. . ." (p. B-11) CACREP specified that, "One faculty member is identified as the program leader for each program area in which accreditation is sought and holds a doctoral degree in counselor education or a closely related field." (p. 30) CSWE required that, "A social work program offering a master's degree must have a full-time dean or director as its chief executive officer." (p. 13)

APA and CACREP had quantitative standards relative to intra-organizational relationships with other units. However, this is another category where there was debate as to whether the statements were more qualitative than quantitative. In addition, phraseology also made it difficult to determine whether the following discussion on intraorganizational relationships more properly belongs in the category of, "Governance Structure and Involvement of

Professional Academic Community."

APA indicated that, "The faculty of the program must have clear authority and primary responsibility for all aspects of the program (even if the program cuts across institutional administrative lines)." (p. B-3) CACREP standards indicated that, "Preferably, only one institutional academic unit has responsibility for the preparation of students in the program. If more than one institutional academic unit has responsibility for the preparation of students in the program, both the respective areas of responsibility and the relationships between them are defined clearly." (p. 24)

CACREP had specific quantitative statements relative to governance structure. CACREP standards stated that, "One faculty member is clearly designated as the academic unit leader for counselor education, is responsible for the coordination of the entire counselor education unit, is the one to whom inquiries regarding the overall academic program are addressed, holds a doctoral degree in counselor education or a closely related field, has 50 percent or greater assignment to the area, is employed by the institution full-time, and is regularly assigned to teach courses in the academic unit." (p. 30) Both APA and CSWE addressed governance in a more qualitative manner.

Dimension 6.0: Resources and Facilities

None of the accrediting manuals had quantitative statements for instructional centers and materials; physical facilities; field resources; and equipment.

All of the accrediting manuals presented quantitative statements relative to affiliating practice agencies. APA stated, "The minimum practicum experience is 400 hours; of which at least 150 hours is in direct service experience and at least 75 hours is in formally scheduled supervision. (Appendix B, p. 17). CACREP described the supervised practicum as, "A minimum

of 100 clock hours . . . a minimum of 40 hours of direct service work," and requires, "a minimum of one (1) hour per week of individual supervision" and at least "one and one-half (1 1/2) hours per week of group supervision." (p. 28)

APA, CACREP, and CSWE had quantitative statements to describe internship hours. Specific descriptions for supervisors was included by CACREP stating that, "Students serving as individual and/or group practicum and/or internship supervisors have completed at least two (2) practica and one (1) internship equivalent to those within the entry-level program" and "on-site (e.g., off-campus) practicum and /or internship supervisors for the program: 1. have a minimum of a Master's Degree in the program emphasis area . . . and 2. have a minimum of two (2) years of pertinent professional experience." (p. 28). CSWE, in referring to internships, indicated that graduate programs must have, "a minimum of nine hundred hours." (p. 128)

Both CACREP and CSWE had quantitative statements describing adequacy and availability of library resources. CACREP stated minimally that library facilities and resources should, "hold multiple copies of resource materials frequently used by program faculty and students." (p. 24). CSWE's description of this category was very comprehensive and detailed. Although, "Minimum quantitative standard is of far less importance," according to CSWE, several quantitative statements are pertinent to this area. "Budgetary allocations for purchase of library materials must be available on an annual basis and must be sufficient to permit annual growth rates consistent with teaching and learning needs--generally around a 5 percent growth in the collection per year . . . (p. 134).

CACREP was the only accrediting body with quantitative statements relative to fiscal resources: "The equivalent of at least one half-time graduate assistantship with the program is available for every 30 FTE students enrolled in the program." (p. 31) This statement could also

have been addressed in Dimension 3.0, "Students" but was specifically included in 6.0 because of monetary criteria.

Both CACREP and CSWE had quantitative statements within the category of supplies and personnel support. CACREP specified, "A minimum of one (1) full-time equivalent secretary is assigned directly to the academic unit for every five (5) full-time equivalent faculty members." (p. 30). CSWE standards required the institution provide information verifying an adequate, "ratio of full-time faculty to full-time clerical staff." (Appendix 6, p. 25)

Dimension 7.0 Evaluation

None of the accrediting bodies had quantitative statements for long-range planning. Although all three accrediting bodies provided qualitative descriptions relative to evidence of policies and procedures promoting total program evaluation through ongoing and systematic evaluation, only CACREP included a quantitative statement. CACREP states, "The academic unit and/or program leader at least annually discusses the results of program students' evaluations of curricular experiences with the faculty offering the curricular experiences evaluated." (p. 33)

Implications for Revision of CACREP Standards

From reading the standards of three accrediting bodies that are involved in examining the quality of programs that prepare providers of counseling and clinically-related services, it became apparent that CACREP has quantitative standards in more categories of accreditation (16 or 34% of the 47 categories) than APA (9/19%) which accredits doctoral programs or CSWE (11/23%) which accredits master's degree programs. Further, within categories, CACREP tended to be more specific and expansive as is illustrated in Table 2 and in the discussion of

faculty workload. In light of the CACREP policy that criteria are to be qualitative rather than quantitative whenever possible, it might be appropriate to revise this policy so that it reflects the following types of considerations:

1. Which standards would lead to higher or lower program quality if they were stated in more quantitative terms?
2. To what degree will statement of standards in more quantitative terms impinge on institutional autonomy and self-governance?
3. Is there research to support the quantitative term placed in a standard?
4. Is there a relationship between CACREP's accreditation of specialized program areas and the presence of quantitative standards?

Finally, it would be very useful if an interested researcher or CACREP would survey faculty in accredited programs to elicit specific examples and observations on whether existing quantifiable standards have lead to program improvement, the primary purpose of accreditation activities.*

- * Readers may write to the authors at Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology, 108 Claxton Education Building, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3400 for a complete list of CACREP quantitative statements that appeared in each dimension and category.

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Table 1

Example of Dimension, Category, and Quantitative Statements**Dimension 4.0: Curriculum and Educational Programming****Category 4.1: Educational Time Requirements**

APA	The curriculum shall encompass the equivalent of a minimum of three academic years of full-time graduate study. (p. B-5)
CACREP	The entry-level program is comprised of a minimum of two (2) full academic years, defined as four (4) semesters or six (6) quarters of approved graduate-level study with a minimum of 48-semester hour or 72 quarter hour credits required of all students. The entry-level program in Mental Health Counseling is an exception. It requires a minimum of 60-semester hours or 90-quarter hours of academic credit of all students. (p. 25) The doctoral program is a minimum of four (4) academic years of graduate level preparation (including entry-level preparation), defined as eight (8) semesters or 12 quarters with a minimum of 144-quarter hours or 96-semester hours of graduate level credits required of all students in the program. (p. 34) The doctoral program includes a minimum of one (1) academic year (i.e., three (3) consecutive quarters or two (2) consecutive semesters) of full-time, on-campus study, excluding registrations for doctoral dissertation credit hours. (p. 34)
CSWE	The master's program shall provide for two academic years of full-time study. To meet requirements for the master's degree, a program may also provide a maximum of four academic years of structured part-time professional education, including field practicum. An academic year is defined as two consecutive semesters or three quarters. A structured part-time program option must include a minimum of two courses in any given semester or quarter with appropriate sequencing of all courses. (p. 14-R)

Table 2

Summary of Quantitative Statements on Program Goals, Structures, and Processes Contained in Accreditation Standards of APA, CACREP, AND CSWE

Dimension	APA	CACREP	CSWE
1.0 Mission and Goals			
1.1 Program Mission and Philosophy	-	-	-
1.2 Goals and Objectives	-	-	-
1.3 Organizational Structure	-	-	-
2.0 Faculty			
2.1 Faculty Preparation/Minimum Number	X	X	X
2.2 Competence in Teaching and Research	-	-	-
2.3 Faculty Mix Based on Rank, Academic Background, Demographics, Part-Time vs. Full-time Status	-	-	X
2.4 Faculty Workload	-	X	X
2.5 Faculty Expectations in Teaching, Research Service, and Practice	-	-	-
2.6 Faculty Development	-	-	X
2.7 Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures	-	-	-
2.8 Faculty Compensation	-	-	-
2.9 Faculty Evaluation	-	-	-
3.0 Students			
3.1 Admission, Recruitment, and Transfer	X	-	-
3.2 Retention and Progression in the Program	X	X	X
3.3 Graduation Requirements/Minimum Number of Graduates	-	X	-
3.4 Program Support for Students	-	-	-
3.5 Student Services Support	-	-	-
3.6 Student Mix and Diversity	-	-	X
3.7 Opportunities for Developmental Experiences	-	-	-
3.8 Student Evaluation Policy and Procedures	-	-	-

Table 2, Continued

Dimension	APA	CACREP	CSWE
4.0 Curriculum and Educational Programming			
4.1 Balance of Theory and Practice	-	-	-
4.2 Required Core Courses	X	X	-
4.3 Areas of Specialization	-	X	-
4.4 Educational Time Requirements	X	X	X
4.5 Course Sequencing	X	X	-
4.6 Existence of Nondegree and Continuing Education Programs	-	-	-
4.7 Curricular Evaluation Procedures	-	-	-
4.8 Course Revision and Experimentation	-	-	-
4.9 Curricular Design	-	-	-
4.10 Contextual Study	-	-	-
5.0 Program Administration and Governance			
5.1 Governance Structure and Involvement of Professional Academic Community	-	X	-
5.2 Administrative Functions	-	-	-
5.3 Intraorganizational Relationships With Other Units	X	X	-
5.4 Administrator Qualifications	X	X	X
5.5 Administrator Compensation	-	-	-
5.6 Evaluation of Program Leadership	-	-	-
5.7 Program Budget	-	-	-
6.0 Resources and Facilities			
6.1 Adequacy and Availability of Library Resources	-	X	X
6.2 Instructional Centers and Materials	-	-	-
6.3 Physical Facilities	-	-	-
6.4 Affiliating Practice Agencies	X	X	X
6.5 Field Resources	-	-	-
6.6 Fiscal Resources	-	X	-
6.7 Equipment	-	-	-
6.8 Supplies and Personnel Support	-	X	X

Table 2, Continued

Dimension		APA	CACREP	CSWE
7.0	Evaluation			
7.1	Evidence of Policies and Procedures Promoting Total Program Evaluation Through Ongoing and Systematic Evaluation	-	X	-
7.2	Long Range Planning	-	-	-
Total Number of Categories in Which Quantitative Statements Appeared		9	16	11

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